Class Books

For

November

Collaborative Class Books for Beginning Readers

By November many of your students will be writing simple sentences, and these children can print their own information on their page. Some of your children will not yet printing with accuracy, so you can decide whether it is best to do the pages on the computer. Individual books can be 'written and illustrated' by the students, but class books should be easy to read and have accurate spelling and sentences.

The teacher can print the words, but it is faster and more exciting for the students if the words are printed on the computer. Have a master page set up with the font you want to use in an appropriate size, and then type the words where the class can see it being done. Using student names is always a big hit!

Your digital camera is a wonderful tool when making class books. Children love to see pictures of themselves or familiar things, and the photos make the books great fun to read. Pictures the children take themselves are also wonderful. For some of the class books in the November section, there is a photo option as well as other suggestions for making the book pages.

Have the students colour the pictures with pencil crayons if you are making a double-sided book - wax crayons and markers make a mess and show through the page.

The ideas for class books in November in Grade One are still simple but the students will be wanting to expand their writing. Just make sure the printing is legible and any pictures drawn and coloured are the best that the students can do;

Having copies of these class books in your classroom library will encourage your emerging readers, and help to teach them the early reading vocabulary.

Let's Write Books!

There is something very special in holding a book in your hand that you have written! Our students feel this, too. When books that they have written are in the class library for everyone to read or are taken home to share with the parents there is a great sense of accomplishment and pride.

This is a collection of ideas for class written books to use in November in Grade One. Some of the ideas are very old and familiar, and hopefully some will be new and interesting for you and your students to try.

Let's begin with some general ideas and 'rules'.

1. When a book is published and is ready for others to read - it must be neatly done and correctly spelled, as this is not just a writing exercise but a reading one as well. Care must be taken so the sentences are correctly constructed and proper punctuation used, and that the work is tidy and legible. Correct spelling is important in all material for these children who are just beginning reading - they seem to imprint incorrect spelling and habits easier than correct, for some reason! The illustrations may be of many types, but if there are student drawings these should be the best possible quality for the individual student. This is for the pride of the author. If a child feels that he/she hasn't done a good job, then the pride isn't there.

2. In the beginning of the book-making process, model this with your students. Do lots of books where the children give you the ideas and you type them on the computer. If you have the book formats ready (see the blank Word formats done for you), you can do this in the lesson. You see, your children know what a real book looks like, with typed print and good illustrations. If the books have their own words, however, this is a great reading incentive.

3. Students love to take these home to read to their parents. Photographs are great in these books (with the children's wording) as the parents like to see photos of their children and friends. It would be a good idea, however, to ask the parents to sign a permission sheet to share photos of their children with the other parents in the class. This sheet could be out on the first day with an example of a book - a sample one is included in the September package.

4. If you are just doing one copy, print the books in colour. If you are doing one for each student, print in black and white to save you or the school money.

5. Teachers should have a digital camera at the ready in the classroom, and take it on walks, field trips or just out on duty. It is also fun to have extra older cameras for the children to use! You could ask your parents if they have any older digital cameras (and cards) that they could donate to the class. If a child is using a camera, insist on a neck strap.

PS..... If anyone wants help with using digital photos in class books - let me know!

General Ideas

Class books are often made with one sheet of 8 1/2 x 11" photocopy paper for each student, so each has a page. This certainly doesn't have to be a rule!

You can make Big Class Books using larger paper size. These are fun for the students to make, and they enjoy reading them later. The ideas for class books can be adapted to any size you want. Little class books can be made using half a sheet, so each page is 5 1/2" x 8 1/2".

Make tag front and back covers for each book. You can run a single sheet of tag manually through a printer or photocopier with the title and a picture - or glue these to the tag.

Books that are made from the students' original pages are popular. If you do the pages on the computer or photocopy the students' pages, you can print them double-sided.

If your pages are fragile and you want to protect them, you could get the clear plastic binder page protectors. This works well if, for example, the children have glued coloured leaves to a page, or clippings from magazines. You can also put another student's work behind the first, making the page double-sided. Put a couple of staples at the open end so work can't be removed.

Binding Class Books

If you have a binding machine with the plastic combs, use these. You may have to divide the book into pieces in order to do it, depending on the machine. These machines can be tricky if you are not used to using one - perhaps the secretary can give you assistance - or practice on a set of math sheets or other scrap paper.

Another way of binding a book is to staple down the side a number of times, and then use coloured electrical tape over the staples. If you can only get 3/4" coloured tape, put two strips that overlap. (3/4 " tape is usually not wide enough to cover the staples on both sides.) The staples on the front and back should be firmly in - tap them with a mallet if they are not, and then cover completely with the tape.

You can also use duotangs. Glue or tape the title and a picture to the cover. Make holes with a proper 3-hole punch.

Here is a website that has these (and other) ideas.
http://wonderteacher.com/5-easy-ways-to-bind-books-in-the-classroom/

Included in this class book section:

There are 10 ideas for simple class books.

There are also some templates in WORD in the September package for most of these ideas, and you can use these pages to type the missing words, so your books look lovely and the children will like to see you do this so they are a part of it. You can easily change the wording and use these pages for other things as well. It is just to save you time! The format of 'little books' as the ones included in this September package does not work well in Word. If you have MS Publisher and want a template, just ask.